12th August 1965]

'For Hire' indicators on the top of the Taxis

*115 *Q.*—SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that taxi owners are required to fix 'For Hire'/"Hired" signs on the roof of the taxis; and

(*b*) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : (*a*) Taxis are required to be fitted with 'For Hire' indicators on the top of the vehicle.

(*b*) Roof indicators are intended to enable the waiting passengers at a distance to know at a glance whether the vehicles are hired or not, especially at night.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Sir, is not the Hon. Minister aware that there is a light indicator in the flag itself ? When the indicator is in the meter itself, is there any necessity for an indication on the roof of the taxi?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I think Sir, an indicator on the top is more convenient to the public.

SRI M. RAJAH IYER : Sir, will the Government think of a third board 'On strike' to be installed? (laughter).

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : It may be all right if taxis are fitted with the indicator on the top. Probably that is the Minister's idea. If the taxi meters are fitted outside with a light in the meter, the flag will show whether the taxi is free or engaged, and this is enough for the public. Therefore, will the Government reconsider their decision?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : It is a matter of difference of opinion. In my opinion, indicators at the top are quite useful.

DR. H. V. HANDE : Sir, if the meter is fitted on the roof of the taxi, the taxi gets a slit and rain water pours in. Are the Government aware of this?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : It is not true. All over the world, 'for hire' and 'hired' indicators are put up at the top only. I have not heard of this complaint.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Even here the indicators are on the top in some taxis. Will the Government prescribe some uniform indicators for fixation at the top of the taxis?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Yes; we have prescribed certain standards. But it need not be absolutely uniform. 3-10 p.m.

திரு. க. அன்பழகன் : தலைவர் அவர்களே, இந்த வாடகைக் கார்கள் தலை மேலாகவே அமைக்கப்படுகிற அடையாளங்கள் எற்கனவே உள்ள கார்களுக்கு இல்லாமல் புதிதாக பதிவு

செய்யப்படும் டாக்சிகளுக்கு வற்புறுத்தபடுகிற நிலைமையில் ஏற்கனவே வாடகை கார் வைத்திருப்பவர்கட்கு புதிய சிரமம் கொடுக்காமல் இருக்க அரசாங்கம் முன்வருமா?

கனம் திரு. ஆர். வெங்கட்டராமன்: எந்த ஒரு நல்ல சீர்திருத்தம் கொண்டுவந்தாலும் அதில் சில சிரமங்கள் இருக்கத்தான் செய்யும். பொதுமக்கள் இது நல்ல திருத்தமென்றும், வசதியாக இருக்குமென்றும் நினைக்கிறார்கள். இதில் எந்தவிதமான மாறுதலும் செய்வதற்கில்லை.

DR. H. V. HANDE : Sir, in view of the fact that these words 'For Hire'/'Hired' are not very distinct from a distance, will the Government think of a colour—red or green—to indicate whether it is hired or not?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, in the western countries, when the car is hired, there will be no light, and when it is open for hire, there will be light. We have just now made a beginning. We will experiment with this and make proper changes.

DR. H. V. HANDE : Have the Government received any complaint from the taxi owners regarding this and, if so, what are the complaints?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Yes, the taxi owners' complaint is just what the hon. Member said. In my opinion, it is only a ruse. Most of the taxi owners get a permit, run the taxi for two years, and sell the car at an unconscionable rate of profit, because the condition only prescribes that the vehicle should run only for two years. Now, they think that, if a car is made to put up this hire board on the top, people will know, because of the little hole on the top, that it was once a taxi and not a private car. And that is why, I think, they are objecting to it.

State Transport Department

* 116 *Q*.—SRI M. SANKARALINGAM PILLAI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that there is delay in the payment of monthly salaries, annual increments, grant of leave, etc., in the Transport Department of Kanyakumari district; and

(*b*) if so, the reasons for such delay?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : (*a*) There has been no delay in the payment of salaries. There has been some delay in the grant of leave and increments.

(*b*) The delay in the grant of leave and increments was due to the workers having gone on strike on the 29th and the 30th April 1964. Their unauthorised absence during the period of strike is an interruption in service resulting in forfeiture of their past service under the rules. However, the Government took a lenient view and ordered the condonation of the break in sevice of the workers.